United Nations E/CN.6/2015/NGO/233

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
3 January 2015
English
Original: French

**Commission on the Status of Women**
**Fifty-ninth session**
9-20 March 2015
**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"**

## Statement submitted by Collectif des femmes africaines du Hainaut, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

14-66292 (E) 050215

Please recycle

## Statement

## Female empowerment: opportunities and challenges for the post-2015 agenda

Nearly 20 years ago, 189 countries adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a visionary roadmap for the promotion of women's rights and empowerment.

Experts have come together to lend momentum to this work and to assess how much progress has been made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015 deadline, with a view to defining a new framework for international development. Their reports show that, even though economic growth has helped to swiftly reduce extreme poverty in China, India and other areas of Asia in which the majority of the region's poor are concentrated, progress has been slow in Africa, where the rate of extreme poverty is highest.

While improvements in gender equality among elected officials and the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in a number of countries have been hailed as achievements during the Beijing +20 review process, the situation with regard to the economic empowerment of women remains to be improved.

Women play an important role in development, but they are often excluded from development policies and particularly from the macroeconomic system. This trend demonstrates the need to improve policies in order to support the empowerment of African women, including both those in Africa and those who live abroad, who are made even more vulnerable by migration.

Women's empowerment presents both an opportunity and a challenge for the post-2015 agenda. The growth rate in Africa, although impressive, does not benefit the majority of the population, and particularly not women. This highlights the pressing need for industrialization and for the inclusion of women in the industrialization process. To achieve inclusive growth, women must both benefit from the rewards of growth and participate in the processes that stimulate it. In order to make women's empowerment a reality, women must be given the means to access the macroeconomy through the promotion of socio-economic resilience and the diversification and greater accessibility of sources of finance, with a view to sustainable human and economic development.